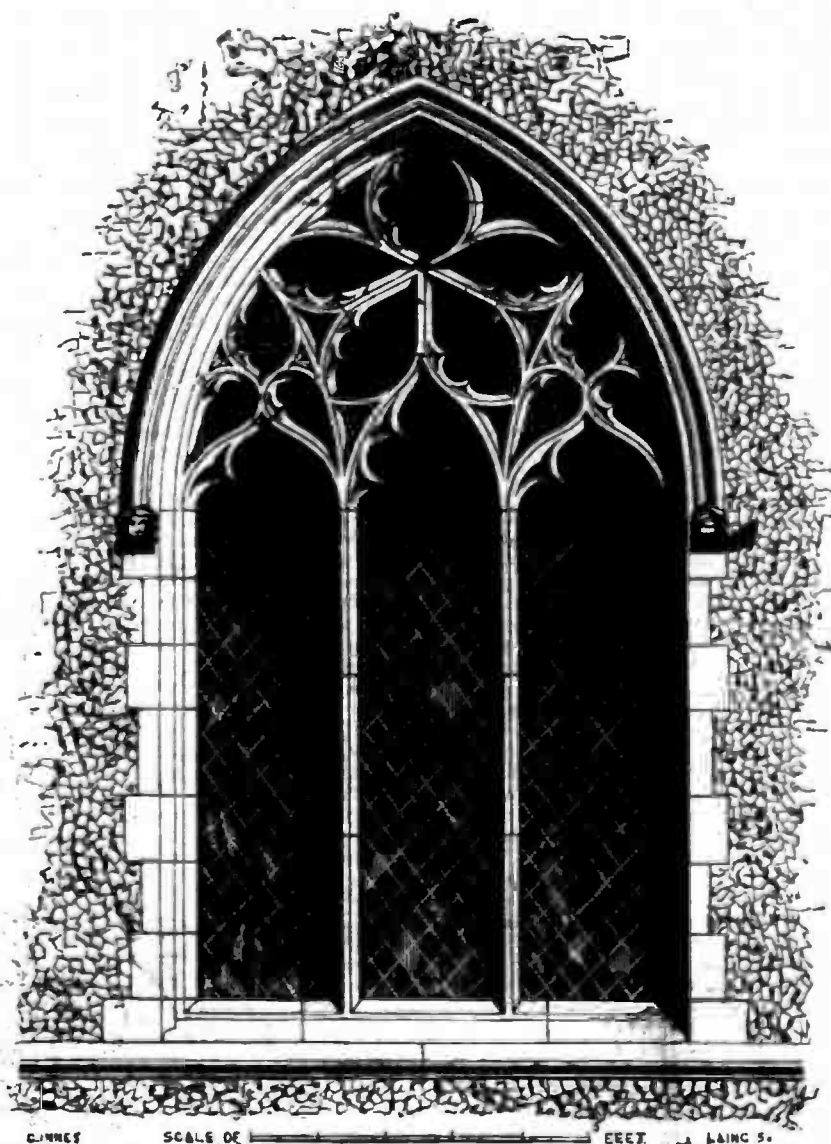


DECORATED WINDOW, WARE CHURCH, HERTS.



INTERNAL RESTORATION OF ST. MARY'S, WARE.

For a reason which will be obvious to some of our readers, we prefer taking the following notice of the works in St. Mary's, at Ware, from a contemporary, *The Ecclesiologist*, to attempting any description of them ourselves:—

"Had we a few years back been asked to name the churches which were most likely to be, during the next quinquennial, restored, we should certainly not have named this one. It is, therefore, with no little pleasure that we now proceed to describe its actual condition. The church, a large cruciform structure, is composed of a western tower, clerestoried nave with aisles, south porch, transepts, clerestoried chancel, Lady Chapel forming the south chancel-aisle, and another chapel to the north, with a sanctuary beyond. The north transept-window is a good reticulated one, and the most easterly window in the south nave-aisle is late-flowering,—the remainder of the church perpendicular,—the rest of nave being probably very little later than its one middle-pointed window, as it contains the badge of Richard II., to whose mother the manor of Ware belonged, and who may therefore not unreasonably be assumed to be its rebuilder.* Till lately, the church presented a huge collection of lofty pews and galleries,—that at the west end of portentous size; the latter have entirely disappeared, and had the subscriptions sufficed, it was intended to have replaced the

pews by open sittings. This unhappily has been but partially carried out; but the pews have been cut down to an uniform height. The architect was Mr. Godwin. The western portion of the chancel is occupied with longitudinal sittings, leaving, we are sorry to say, too narrow a central passage. We understand that a difficulty was felt, from a grant having been given by the "Incorporated Society" towards fresh sittings eleven years ago. It was, of course, not found easy to retain the stipulated number after sweeping away the galleries. The eastern portion of the chancel proper, which is free, is, as well as the sanctuary, paved with encaustic tiles. The prayers are said at a side desk to the west of the chancel on the north side, with a western face for the lessons. Over it stands the old Jacobean pulpit of the church. The organ is placed in the north chancel aisle.

The most striking feature in the restoration is the quantity of polychrome which has been applied. The spandrels of the nave-arches, ten in number, are filled with flower-pots, from which grows lilies, each bearing a scroll, with one of the beatitudes inscribed upon it. The commandments are painted, where they are ordered, on two tablets on each side of the chancel-arch. The Creed and the Lord's Prayer are on the eastern wall, flanking the east window. The bosses of the nave and chancel-roofs are coloured and gilt, and the architectural portions of the roof of the Lady Chapel are emblazoned; and copies of the figures which were found there in a multi-

lated condition are on record, with a view to their future restoration. They are those of the Apostles with the sentences of the creed, and of the minor prophets with typical verses. The windows of the Lady Chapel have been filled with Powell's quarries; the eastern with the monogram alternating with the lily; the two side ones with the cross and the lily, and the legends respectively — "A Virgin, &c.," and "The Word was made flesh, &c." We may here notice a curious feature in the Lady Chapel: it was originally connected with the chancel by one sprawling segmental arch; its ugliness or its unsafeness being canvassed, it was divided into two by a slender Purbeck shaft (restored), bearing a spandril of open panel-work. The great south transept-window was, during the late incumbent's time, filled, at an enormous cost, with Flamboyant tracery.* This has of course been left, and the windows glazed with Powell's quarries—so is the south nave clerestory. A local benefactor is about to fill the east and the west window with glass, by Mr. Wailes, taking the Crucifixion as the subject of the one, and the Baptism, and the Blessing Little Children, of the other. The font is a remarkably fine one, and was given to the church in the time of Henry IV., by William De Montacute, Earl of Salisbury. It re-

* On stripping the walls of the chancel the fabric was seen to be of the King's English p. oriel.—Ks.

* In this window the mullions had simply a very wide chamfer, and the line of the glass was at the termination of this, which produced a coarse and bad effect, especially in the tracery. By merely following the front half of the chamfer on each side, so as to get another perpendicular line on each side of the mullion, the effect was greatly improved.—Ed.